

many of whom will be pushed below the poverty line.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is cruel, it's cynical, and it's mean.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT DESTROYING SANTA ROSA ISLAND

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, today I bring to light another example of the overreaching arm of the Federal Government. Santa Rosa Island off Santa Barbara, CA, happens to be one of the homes for the snowy plover bird. The National Park Service has decided that the snowy plover is so endangered by cattle ranching on the island that a 3-mile-long fence and road must be built to protect the bird. The local ranching company must build the fence within 7 days or the Government will do it for them and give them the bill. Scientific data proves that cattle ranching on Santa Rosa Island does not endanger the bird. In fact a strong case can be made that 93 years of cattle ranching has actually led to a greater proliferation of the bird.

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Unfortunately, the Department of Fish and Wildlife refused to review this data.

Mr. Speaker, the Endangered Species Act was supposed to protect species in danger of becoming extinct. It was not meant to be a vehicle to destroy the well cared for environment of Santa Rosa Island.

CUTTING WELFARE TO FUND TAX CUTS IS WRONG

(Ms. FURSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FURSE. Mr. Speaker, I am here because my constituents have asked me to speak out for their interests. I want to read what they have said. James Gamwill wrote to me and said, "I hope you will use your good office to prevent cuts in Medicare. It aids seniors whose health may not be so robust. The high cost of health care puts us in a financial bind."

Or Louise Robertson, who wrote from Aloha, OR. She said, "I urge you strongly to fight all attempts to diminish Social Security and Medicare benefits."

Well, in their interests, I say shame on this Republican budget, because it cuts senior health care protection, it gives tax cuts to the wealthy, and it increases Pentagon spending. This budget hurts all working families, American families, and Oregon families. I think it is wrong, and I know that many Oregonians think it is wrong too.

A TIME FOR ACTION

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I am a firm believer that actions have consequences. By the same token, doing nothing can have consequences as well. If Congress does nothing about Medicare or the budget, I doubt America could survive the consequences.

The actions of Congress over the past generation have resulted in an enormous national debt. Servicing this debt consumes a large chunk of the over-all budget. If Congress does nothing about the disastrous trend of deficit spending, in 10 years we will be unable to meet other obligations while servicing the debt.

Likewise, if Congress does nothing to protect Medicare, it too will become insolvent in just 7 years. Let me be clear, this information is coming from President Clinton's own people and is not a Republican gimmick.

Mr. Speaker, the consequences for doing nothing are too great. We here in Congress have the ability and the responsibility to do something about these two problems. The debt poses a threat to future generations and a collapse of Medicare would hurt older Americans. Now is not the time for inaction or the arrogant avoidance of responsibility that has permeated Washington.

MEDICARE: THE REAL CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

(Mr. FARR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of talk these days about contracts. There is the Republican Contract With America.

There is the contract with America's veterans.

There is the contract with Federal retirees.

And there is the contract with senior citizens.

So far this year, the spotlight has been on the Republican Contract With America. The Republicans are quite boastful about moving their contract through the House in 100 days.

But what about the other contracts? What about the promises made to veterans, Federal retirees, and senior citizens?

I am particularly concerned about breaking America's contract with our senior citizens.

For years we have promised reasonable health care through the Medicare system. Now the Republicans are willing to sacrifice Medicare—and the seniors who depend on it—in order to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy.

If the Republicans want to meet the terms of this country's contract with senior citizens, then they should look

elsewhere for their budget and tax fixes than the pocketbooks of our senior citizens.

REPUBLICANS MEAN TO PRE- SERVE AND IMPROVE MEDICARE

(Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration's Trustees Report on Medicare warns that the Medicare trust fund starts to go broke in 1996 and is bankrupt by 2002. House Republicans are determined to save Medicare by using new approaches, new management, and new technologies to improve it, preserve it, and protect it. The current Government-controlled Health Care Financing Administration system has a lot of waste and fraud. The General Accounting Office estimates \$44 billion a year in Medicare and Medicaid fraud.

We want to give senior citizens an incentive to fight waste and fraud by paying them 25 percent of any waste or fraud they find in their own bills. House Republicans want to strengthen and empower senior citizens.

House Republicans will increase Medicare spending from \$4,700 per retiree today to \$6,300 per retiree in 2002. That is a 34-percent increase in Medicare spending per retiree. There is no proposed cut in Medicare spending.

House Republicans will preserve the current Medicare system. We will create a series of new choices so senior citizens can control their own future.

Mr. Speaker, together we can create a Medicare system that offers the best care at the lowest cost, with senior citizens having the greatest control over their own health care.

PROTECT THE MEDICARE TRUST FUND

(Mrs. KENNELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago we celebrated Victory in Europe. And while it would be another 3 months before Japan surrendered, World War II would soon be at an end.

Victory did not come easily. Millions of Americans answered the call of duty, and many gave their lives. On the homefront, men and women worked to keep the country running, and my home State of Connecticut made invaluable contributions in defense manufacturing.

A generation answered the call of duty—now our Government must do the same for them.

If we reform the Medicare system, it cannot be to pay for tax breaks for the few. It must be to shore up the trust fund to benefit seniors.

We can never fully express our gratitude to the World War II generation—